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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE + CONTEXT

The Development Framework aims to facilitate the positive development of the Rotorua Lakefront. The Lakefront is envisaged as comprising a high-quality mix of commercial development and public amenity.

The Rotorua Lakefront Development Framework (RLDF) has been developed for the Rotorua District Council and operates alongside other studies and investigations [Figure 1.1]. The Framework identifies the key outcomes sought for the lakefront and the general land use types within identified areas. It is not a binding document, however, it will play an important role in helping to align stakeholders' aspirations for the reserve, and in realising a vibrant, improved lakefront.

1.2 STRUCTURE

This document is set up to address the Lakefront Precinct, one of four key precincts targeted for development within the Urban Design Framework, refer Figure 1.2. Precinct-wide objectives and principles are elaborated.

Within the precinct are identified three primary focus areas. More refined objectives, principles, and anticipated activities are provided for each of these areas. The focus areas are intended to assist in guiding and structuring the emergence of high-quality and appropriate investment and landscape development. Note that zone, area, and precinct boundaries do not match, as they have different purposes. Area 3 extends into the QE Site, which is not public reserve land. The Framework extends into this area to co-ordinate the development of the lakefront with the development proposed within the QE site.

A fourth focus area, the Framework Extension, is additionally identified as an area of potential improvement and development, however, it is subject to further research, consultation, and concept planning.

1.3 REFERENCES

This document should be read in conjunction with:

- The Rotorua District Plan.
- The Lakefront Concept Plan [Appendix 4.1]. This plan, along with its supporting analysis and rationale report, provides a vision for how the Rotorua Lakefront might take shape as a world-class recreational, community, business, and tourism focussed environment. The Concept Plan is intended as a flexible guide, in which is embodied a number of urban and landscape design principles. It is not a prescriptive or in any way binding plan.
- An aerial photograph of the Rotorua lakefront and CBD, with the extent of the Lakefront Precinct and Framework Extension area indicated [Appendix 4.2].

Figure 1.1: Projects and process.

Figure 1.2: Rotorua Precincts as illustrated within Urban Design Framework.
2. LAKEFRONT PRECINCT

2.1 THE PRECINCT

The Lakefront Precinct is indicated in Figure 2.1. The Framework Extension is shown dashed and identifies the northern Government Gardens, or Motutara Point area. The overall objectives for the Lakefront Precinct are to create a vibrant, connected and culturally appropriate series of spaces, amenities and developments.

A balanced mix of commercial operations and community amenities will enhance activity in and around the city centre and appreciation of Rotorua central’s existing cultural and natural assets, such as Ohinemutu, the Government Gardens and the lake itself. Developments amongst the Lakefront Precinct provide the opportunity to involve more people and visitors in the city in more exciting and rewarding ways.

The Lakefront Precinct spans a number of Rotorua’s existing cultural, civic and natural assets and attractions (Figure 2.2). Its development provides the opportunity to improve not only the precinct itself, but also the connections to and experiences of these neighbouring assets.

Commercial opportunities exist throughout the precinct (Figure 2.3). The Lakefront Precinct is a pivotal area, and has great potential as an integrative element of central Rotorua.

Figure 2.1 : Lakefront Precinct and Framework Extension.

Figure 2.2 : Key assets and attractions within Rotorua central city.

Figure 2.3 : Notional commercial (hospitality / retail) opportunities in the Lakefront Precinct.
2.2 PRECINCT PRINCIPLES

The following principles, grouped within overarching themes, apply precinct-wide:

**VIBRANCY AND DIVERSITY**
- Mix of commercial activity, community amenity and landscape types
- Mix of built form and open spaces
- High-quality, safe and durable environment that caters for all ages and abilities
- Diverse ways to engage with the lake and water

**CONNECTIVITY AND VIEWS**
- Maximize public access to open spaces
- Key viewsheds to be protected and enhanced
- Memorial Drive, carparking and other roadings reconfigured to support amenity and development objectives
- Views to Mokoia island promoted
- Continuous public lake edge connection
- Improved connections to and experience of adjacent city assets

**UNIQUELY ROTORUA: CULTURAL AND NATURAL**
- Rotorua’s unique culture celebrated and enhanced
- Respect all Wahi Tapu sites and others of cultural importance
- Rotorua’s unique natural and geothermal context and conditions celebrated and enhanced
- Lake water quality to be protected and improved
3.1 LAKEFRONT AREAS

For each of the Lakefront Areas further guidance and principles are described. Their position corresponds to high-level urban and lakefront structuring imperatives.

The city edge area indicates adjoining CBD sites with strong investment potential that will benefit from, and positively contribute to, successful lakefront development.
3.2 AREAS PRINCIPLES

The following section outlines the principles and activities appropriate for each Area. Note that all supporting visual material is indicative only of possible outcomes, design elements and materiality.

AREA 1

3.2.1

AREA 1: Tutanekai – Ohinemutu

approx 2.9 ha *excludes water

VISION

» A focal point on the lakefront that supports commercial, tourism, recreation and cultural activities of the lake and the city.

PRINCIPLES

» Strengthen connection and viewshaft along Tutanekai St
» Articulate entranceway into Rotorua city
» Optimise views of lake and Mokoia Island
» Reconfigure roads and parking
» Diversity connections to water
» Improve commercial, tourism and recreation facilities
» Improve relationships to adjacent places, esp. Ohinemutu
» Respect all Wahi Tapu and other culturally significant sites
» Retain significant trees and vegetation where appropriate
» Create a public square / open space at the terminus of Tutanekai St
» Provide a balance of buildings and open space
» Develop low-rise buildings towards lake edge; higher towards CBD
» Create an events / conference / cultural facility

ACTIVITIES

» Events
» Tourism
» Accommodation
» Cultural
» Dining
» Retail
» Public amenity
» Recreation

Figures 3.3, 3.4, 3.5: Artist’s impressions of potential new pier, new dining amongst thermal gardens, and striking cultural / events venue that acts as a beacon.

Figures 3.6, 3.7: High quality small kiosk structure and hotel with strong relationship to open space.
3.2.2

AREA 2: Village Green + Lake Edge
approx 4.9 ha

VISION
» A lively and attractive openspace and an active, unique lake edge that improves and complements adjoining commercial opportunities.

PRINCIPLES
» Limit built structures (e.g. shelters, barbeques, information only)
» Activate Tutanekai St edge and viewshaft
» Activate Fenton St edge and viewshaft
» Enhance Whakaue St edge
» Retain significant trees and vegetation where appropriate
» Utilise native vegetation including reed planting at edge
» Celebrate and use thermal waters / steam
» Improve lake water quality
» Optimise views and access to lake
» Provide historical and cultural interpretative elements
» Retain Village Green open space
» Reconfigure lakefront road and carparking
» Create high-quality unique playground
» Diversify lake edges, eg. new beach, boardwalk
» Improve and complement adjacent commercial opportunities

ACTIVITIES
» Events
» Public amenity
» Tourism
» Recreation

Figures 3.9, 3.10: Artist's impressions of new Tutanekai St edge along the Village Green and new, active lakefront.

Figures 3.11, 3.12: Open views to lakefront and unique lake-edge water-scape.

Figures 3.13, 3.14, 3.15: Open space used for passive recreation, night markets and for large-scale events.
### AREA 3

#### 3.2.3 AREA 3: QE Health Site

approx 10.6 ha

*Note that master-planning and investment studies are currently underway for this area.*

**VISION**
- Redevelop to enhance the activity, tourism and accommodation options for Rotorua.

**PRINCIPLES**
- Provide mix of residential, accommodation, retail, dining, recreation and tourism activity
- Continue and strengthen urban logic of city blocks
- Relocate wharewaka to lake edge
- Create active frontages, particularly to Fenton St and lake edge
- Reconfigure lakefront road and carparking
- Create diverse and active space at lake edge
- Improve lake water quality
- Integrate Health facility into new complex
- Maintain public access around improved lake edge
- Enhance existing and create new viewshaws

**ACTIVITIES**
- Dining
- Retail
- Accommodation
- Residential
- Public amenity
- Tourism
- Health / Geothermal spas

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**Figures 3.16, 3.17, 3.18:** Diagram indicating selected principles. Indicative only, NTS.

**Figures 3.17, 3.18:** High-quality spa facility and vibrant mixed commercial space.

**Figures 3.19, 3.20:** Sketch of connection through to eastern reserve and simple ‘event’ created at lake edge.

**Figure 3.21:** Conceptual section across Fenton St with QE Site to right.

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**TOURISM ACCOMMODATION COMMERCIAL HEALTH**
3.2.4 Framework Extension

approx 25.0 ha

* Note that this area is subject to further research, consultation and the development of a masterplan.

VISION

» Predominantly natural and open space with limited environmentally-sensitive accommodation, tourism and event development opportunities.

PRINCIPLES

» Celebrate existing cultural and natural features
» Improve public access to reserve area and lake edges
» Enhance use of and quality of lake edges, particularly at Sulphur Bay
» Enhance views to adjacent Government Gardens
» Create new viewshafts and connections to lake
» Utilise unique ‘beach’ edge and thermal aspects
» Potential for eco-tourism focus
» Restore natural landscape
» Improve Lake water quality
» Respect all Wahi Tapu and other culturally significant sites
» Protect existing notable natural features
» Utilise environmental infrastructure within new developments
» Minimise adverse visual and environmental impact of any new developments or access

ACTIVITIES

» Public amenity
» Tourism
» Recreation
» Events
» Accommodation

Figures 3.23, 3.24, 3.25 : Precedent images of potential low-rise high-quality resort, lake edge recreation and modest accommodation.

Figures 3.26, 3.27, 3.28 : Sketch of bird-hide addition to lake edge, accommodation / conference facility and premium-quality over-water resort.

Figures 3.29 : Conceptual section of low-rise, scattered eco-cabins amongst manuka and kanuka vegetation.
4.1 ROTORUA LAKEFRONT CONCEPT PLAN

The Concept Plan is intended as a vision for how the lakefront adjacent to the CBD might evolve. It embodies a number of open-space and urban design principles but is not prescriptive of where and how developments may occur. Note that this study does not include a vision for the Framework Extension, which will be subject to a future master plan process when the opportunities are better understood.

The Concept Plan is supported by extensive research and analysis of the lakefront reserve and related recreational, environmental and cultural conditions. The supporting analysis document is available for reference by interested parties.
4.2 Rotorua Lakefront – Existing Aerial

The extent of the Lakefront Precinct and Framework Extension are indicated.